

PPM 410

REFERRALS AND APPLICATIONS

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PURPOSE

The purpose of vocational rehabilitation (VR) policies with respect to [referral](#) and [application](#) is to establish consistent practices regarding the solicitation and acceptance of requests for vocational rehabilitation services, and to assure that all such requests are addressed in an equitable and timely manner.

[AUTHORITY: Federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.41]

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

410-01. Solicitation and Acceptance of Referrals and Applications

1. Nondiscrimination Statement

VR staff must accept and process all referrals and applications received in a prompt and equitable manner. Referrals and applications for VR services are solicited and accepted in accordance with VR's policies regarding nondiscrimination, as described in [PPM 110-01](#),

2. Residency

No duration of residency requirement can be imposed as a condition for referral or application that would exclude any consumer who is present in the state and has been referred and applied in accordance with VR referral and application requirements as described in this chapter. See also [PPM 110-02](#).

[AUTHORITY: Federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.42(c)]

410-02. Making Referrals to VR

Referrals may be made by contacting the appropriate local VR office in writing, by telephone, or online.

1. Referral Sources

Consumers may be self-referred for VR services, or can be referred by VR staff, secondary, postsecondary and special education officials, physicians and other medical personnel and institutions, welfare agencies, community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), Disability Determination Services, one-stop employment and training centers, or any other source having knowledge of the consumer and his or her potential need for or interest in vocational rehabilitation services.

2. Information Required for Referral

In order to refer oneself or another for VR services, the information provided to VR must minimally include:

- A. the identity (first and last name) of the consumer;
- B. the consumer's current mailing address, e-mail address, telephone number, or other current means of contact; and
- C. the type of disability reported by the consumer.

[AUTHORITY: Federal sub-regulatory Policy Directive, RSA-PD-12-05, Item 9, February 8, 2012; state agency policy, per federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.39]

410-03. Creation of a Referral Record

The vocational rehabilitation program must create a referral record in the [Indiana Rehabilitation Information System \(IRIS\)](#) for each referral received which includes the referral date and the referral information described in section 410-02.2 of this chapter. The date of referral entered into the referral record must be the earliest date that the information required by PPM 410-02.2 becomes known to VR.

[AUTHORITY: State agency policy, per federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.39]

410-04. Assignment of a VR Counselor to Each Referral

A qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor employed by the vocational rehabilitation agency is assigned to each consumer at the time of referral. Counselor assignments are made by local VR offices on the basis of counselor availability and specialties, caseload sizes, and other administrative factors. See also section [320-05.2](#) of this manual for additional information regarding counselor assignment.

[AUTHORITY: State agency policy, per federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.39]

410-05. Contacting Referred Consumers

The assigned VR Counselor must make good-faith efforts to contact each consumer referred and secure the consumer's application for VR services. Contact efforts must be initiated as soon as possible, but not later than five business days following the date of referral. "Good-faith efforts" means, as necessary, multiple contact attempts made by the counselor using modes of communication appropriate to the consumer, if known. The counselor must continue good-faith efforts to contact the consumer until successful and the consumer applies for or declines VR services, or until the counselor determines that the consumer cannot be contacted or refuses to respond.

[AUTHORITY: State agency policy required by federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.41(a)]

410-06. Inactivation and Reactivation of IRIS Referral Records

If, after good-faith efforts to make contact with a referred consumer and secure his or her participation, the VR Counselor has determined that the consumer has declined VR services, cannot be contacted, or has refused to respond, the referral record for the consumer must be inactivated by amending the referral status in IRIS from "Active" to an appropriate inactive status. A referral record can be inactivated only in referral status (00). If the individual is later referred again or completes the application process, the referral record must be changed back to

“Active” and the referral information updated, as appropriate, prior to moving the consumer into applicant status (02). The referral record can be moved between active and inactive statuses as many times as needed.

[AUTHORITY: State agency policy, per federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.39]

410-07. The Initial, or Intake Interview

1. Timeliness Requirements

When contact has been successfully established, the assigned counselor must explain the purpose of the VR program and the application process, and must schedule an initial, or intake interview with the consumer if he or she wishes to apply. The intake interview must be scheduled within five business days of contact, and must be scheduled so as to occur as soon as possible, but not more than 30 business days after initial contact unless the consumer requests otherwise.

2. Information Obtained During the Interview

During the intake interview, the counselor must secure a completed application for VR services signed by the consumer or the consumer’s representative and obtain the information required to initiate an [assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services](#).

3. Presentation and Review of the VR Consumer Handbook

As part of the intake interview process, the VR Counselor must provide the consumer with a copy of the [VR handbook, “The Road to Work”](#) and must explain the content of the handbook to the consumer. The consumer, or his or her representative, must provide a signed and dated receipt acknowledging receipt for the handbook acknowledging the explanation of its contents that has been provided. The receipt must be retained in the record of services for the consumer.

4. Affirmation of the Consumer's Intent to Work

During the intake interview, the VR Counselor must also inform the consumer that the VR program is an employment program the purpose of which is to enable eligible consumers with disabilities to secure and maintain meaningful employment. The counselor must inform the consumer that, by completing the application process and seeking VR services, the consumer:

A. affirms that he or she intends to prepare for, actively seek, and accept work in an integrated setting consistent with the consumer's vocational strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice; and

B. acknowledges that VR can provide only those services needed to meet the vocational rehabilitation needs of the consumer with respect to achieving an allowable employment outcome.

5. Provision of Information and Referral Services

The VR Counselor is required to refer the applicant to other federal and state programs for which the consumer has need and may qualify, especially the Social Security Administration for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) support, but also to medicaid, public housing, heating assistance, children's services, and other similar programs. In the event that the consumer chooses to pursue day programming or other activities in a non-integrated setting, the VR Counselor must also provide the consumer with information and referral services, as described in PPM chapter 501.

[AUTHORITY: Federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.41(a); 361.42(a); 361.48(d); state agency policy, per 361.39]

410-08. VR Services Available for Referred Consumers

No vocational rehabilitation services requiring the expenditure of VR case service funds can be authorized or provided for consumers in referral status. No-cost services, including vocational rehabilitation counseling and guidance and information and referral services can be provided as needed.

[AUTHORITY: State agency policy, per federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.39]

410-09. Requirements for Application

A consumer is considered to have applied for VR services when the consumer:

1. has submitted a signed application requesting VR services by completing and submitting the application form provided by the VR program, a common intake form at a One-Stop Center, or any other written request for VR services; and
2. has provided the information required to initiate an assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services; and
3. is available to participate in and complete the assessment.

[AUTHORITY: Federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.41(b)(2)]

410-10. Date of Application

The date of application recorded must be the earliest date on which the consumer has met all three requirements described in section 410-09 of this chapter. A consumer cannot be “available to participate in and complete the assessment” if he or she is not present in the state of Indiana or is not immediately able to participate in assessment activities. If a consumer submits an application but is not available to participate in

the assessment until a later date, the date of application is the date when the consumer becomes available for the assessment.

[AUTHORITY: Federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.41(b)(2)]

410-11. Creation of the Record of Services

The VR Counselor must initiate and maintain in current status a record of services for each consumer who has applied. The record of services must conform to all requirements of agency policy and the Indiana Rehabilitation Information System (IRIS).

[AUTHORITY: Federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.47; state agency policy, per 34 CFR 361.39]

410-12. VR Services Available for Applicants

VR services provided for applicants can include: VR can provide the following services to consumer who have submitted an application for services, as appropriate and necessary to complete an assessment to determine eligibility and priority for services, including trial work experiences and extended evaluation.

1. Vocational rehabilitation counseling and guidance;
2. information and referral services;
3. physical and mental restoration services, if required to assess and determine the consumer's eligibility and priority for services;
4. assistive technology services and devices, if required to assess and determine the consumer's eligibility and priority for services; and
5. supporting services, including maintenance, transportation, personal assistance services, and services to family members, if required in conjunction with any other, non-supporting service to assess and determine the consumer's eligibility and priority for services.

[AUTHORITY: Rehabilitation Act, §101(a)(15)(D)(i) (20 U.S.C. 721(a)(15)(D)(i));
Federal regulations, 34 CFR 361.5(b)(6); 361.42(d)]

